

Speech by Hon Rimsky Yuen, SC, JP
Secretary for Justice
at the Admission Ceremony of Senior Counsel
on 17 May 2014 (Saturday)

Chief Justice, members of the Judiciary, Chairman of the Bar, President of the Law Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. On behalf of the Department of Justice, may I extend to you, Mr Ian Pennicott, Ms Anita Yip, Mr Raymond Leung and Mr Anson Wong our utmost congratulations on your appointment as Senior Counsel.
2. Hong Kong's legal profession enjoys a world class reputation. Apart from professionalism and integrity, one of the key reasons for such reputation is the broad range of quality services that our legal profession can offer. Today's appointment of new silks demonstrates this important feature of our legal profession.

Ian Pennicott QC

3. To begin with, Mr Ian Pennicott is an internationally well-known dispute resolution practitioner in the areas of construction, engineering, energy and technology disputes. Ian was appointed as a Queen's Counsel in England and Wales as early as in 2003 and has long been a member of Keating Chambers, a well-known set of construction law chambers in London. Having spent five years in Hong Kong during the period between 1984 and 1989, Ian rejoined Des Voeux Chambers in June 2010.
4. Apart from being a contributor and editor of leading texts including Halsbury's Laws of England and Keating on Building/Construction Contracts, Ian has an extensive practice acting for clients or as arbitrator in disputes concerning construction or energy projects in jurisdictions including England, Hong Kong, Abu Dhabi, Vietnam and Thailand. In short, if one reviews the cases handled by Ian, one can have a pretty good idea of who's who in the construction, energy and technology

industry as well as the jurisdictions where such projects are flourishing.

5. As Hong Kong is consolidating her status as a regional hub for international arbitration in the Asia Pacific region, I have no doubt that Ian can show to the international community the type of top dispute resolution practitioners Hong Kong can offer.

Anita Yip

6. Ms Anita Yip is a locally trained barrister, who was called to the Hong Kong Bar in 1989. For those who practise in the field of matrimonial law, Anita hardly requires any introduction.
7. Indeed, Anita's contribution to the development of local jurisprudence in the area of family law cannot be doubted. One of the many examples is Anita's role as an *amicus curiae* in the leading case of *DD v LKW*¹, where the Court of Appeal held that the approach of "reasonable requirements" applicable under section 7 of the Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Ordinance (Cap. 192) should be replaced by the "equal sharing" principle laid down in the House of Lords decision in *White v White*².
8. Dedication is one of the key elements behind the success story of many leading barristers. Anita, I dare say, provides a shining example of what is meant by dedication. Years ago, Anita was appearing in court even though she was in her final stage of pregnancy. She vigorously fought for her client's interest to the very end and had to be rushed to hospital from the family court to give birth to her lovely child. As a result, I am told, the first person who sent her flower was not her very supportive husband but was the judge before whom Anita appeared.

Raymond Leung

9. Moving on, if I may, to Mr Raymond Leung. Raymond, a former police inspector and a keen marathon runner, has been for years since he

¹ [2008] 2 HKLRD 523.

² [2001] 1 AC 596.

became a barrister a well-known practitioner in the field of personal injuries, medical negligence, data privacy and discrimination. His strength in these areas is partly reflected in his current role as the Chairman of the Special Committee on Personal Injuries of the Bar Association, as well as the External Examiner on the Personal Injury Course of the PCLL Programme of all the three law schools in Hong Kong.

10. Apart from being a walking encyclopedia of the areas of law he practises, Raymond is a man of extreme diligence and commitment. One little secret of his success, which is perhaps less well known, is the fact that he hardly needs to sleep. As Raymond is a former chambers-mate of mine, I can vividly remember that in the good old days, when other juniors worked quite late in the night and went home for some sleep, Raymond would instead go jogging, and then returned to chambers to continue his work. If one wants to think of a nickname for Raymond, perhaps “the Iron Man of the Hong Kong Bar” will not be inappropriate.

Anson Wong

11. Mr Anson Wong, aged 38, is the youngest silk appointed today. A graduate of the University of Hong Kong and the University of Cambridge, Anson was called to the Hong Kong Bar in 1999 and was the only Bar Scholar of his year. Since he commenced private practice as a barrister, Anson has been regarded as a high-flyer and has since quickly established himself as a strong advocate in various areas of law including corporate, commercial and securities disputes. Apart from contentious litigations, Anson also has a substantial practice in non-contentious company law matters, including capital reduction, restructuring and re-domicile. It is therefore not surprising that Anson can achieve the rank of Senior Counsel at such a young age.

Concluding Remarks

12. My Lords, the institution of King’s Counsel or Queen’s Counsel has been founded in England for more than four centuries. Whilst the same institution in Hong Kong has an understandably shorter history, we will

be celebrating next year the 150th anniversary of the first appointment of silk in Hong Kong which took place in 1865. Hong Kong has undergone significant changes over the past one and a half century, but the institution of silk remains a strong pillar of our legal system.

13. The rank of Senior Counsel has always been a badge of honour, a stamp of quality and a mark of professional distinction. It commands a status which is not only highly regarded in the legal profession but the community as a whole. While Hong Kong is facing huge challenges both domestically and internationally, I have every confidence that the Inner Bar of Hong Kong, with the four new additions made today, will continue to make great contribution both in the legal arena and beyond. Ultimately, the Bar serves not only the clients who require legal services, but the general public and the public interest of Hong Kong. Leaders of the Bar, in particular, has a responsibility to maintain this fine tradition.
14. In closing, may I wish all the new silks every success in their future career in the many years ahead.

Thank you.